8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

551 Lazy [ca. 1850]
123 Boy, the oldest living Piegan a decade ago, followed this traditional custom in naming my younger daughter. He gave her the name Many-Steals-Horses-Woman, explaining that as a young man he had been very successful in capturing horses from enemy camps so he thought this name would bring her good fortune in whatever she tried to do.

854 Elaborate cradles were luxury items, uncommon among the Blackfeet a century ago. When walking or riding on horseback, women commonly carried their babies on their backs, inside their robes or blankets. The mother stood with her back bent, grasped the infant by both arms, swung it over her shoulders, then quick-
853 ly drew her robe about her own body and that of the child. Black-
[842] foot mothers nursed their babies until long after they were able to walk. Indeed, some mothers continued to nurse their children until they were five or six years old, believing this would prevent another pregnancy until their youngest child was old enough to look after himself.

867 Children were taught the elements of good manners and respect for their elders. They were expected to sit quietly while adults were talking in the tipi, to perform their chores promptly, to observe the taboos of the family medicine bundles, and to
865 help the aged and show particular respect to them. They were taught to take teasing gracefully. But if a child of about their own age struck them, they were to fight back to the best of their ability.

868 The mother was responsible for the education of her daughters. The little girl began to learn about women's responsibilities by watching her mother and grandmothers at their tasks. She imitated their actions in her childhood play. She began to help her mother in such light tasks as picking berries, and graduated to the heavier work of digging roots and carrying firewood and water for the lodge. As the girl grew older, she received instructions in dressing hides, preparing foods, making clothing, and in the women's crafts of geometric painting, porcupine quillwork, and beadwork. A girl was expected to become proficient in these
864 crafts before she married. At the annual sun dance mothers ex-

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

another."[187] More leniency was shown to the partner in sin. Maximilian continues, "Often he avenges himself on the paramour, takes away his horse or other valuable property, to which he must submit quietly."[188] Today infidelity, or suspicion of it, are also severely punished. Beatings are frequent; one old lady still carefully conceals her mutilated face behind her shawl; and Big Head, recently released from prison, killed his wife because rumors of her misconduct had reached him during his confinement.[189]

Absence from home is perhaps the greatest threat to a man's marital peace. His present fears echo attitudes of the past, grounded in an economy that made more or less long separations between husband and wife inevitable. The small raiding or hunting parties, which might include the husband, left plenty of men available for romance. Today, although life is more sedentary, dwellings are isolated. A few hours in the field, a trip to town, are enough to kindle the flame. But it is the jail sentence, that frequent experience, which most nearly approximates the extended absences of a former time. Legal protection from a surprise return adds to the safety of wifely adventure; it also intensifies the fears of the ever-suspicious husband.

Some few women are notoriously jealous of their husbands, but primarily it is the men who exhibit the greatest sexual insecurity. A man who shows no jealousy is considered brave; yet a young mother eager to see her son of six become a good fighter will proudly encourage him when he shakes his fist in fury at an old medicine man whom he considers his "rival." From earliest babyhood, a child is exposed to the violent quarrels of his parents. He hears his mother's virtue assailed; he sees his father beat her for misbehavior. Against such a background and such conditioning, traditionally desirable attitudes are achieved with difficulty. In this society, jealousy has become obsessional; even chiefs find it difficult to act within the prescribed pattern, and serious lapses are not unknown.

Few men trust their wives. A seemingly contented husband of twenty years will, at the first sign of anger, hurl accusations of infidelity at his mate. One husband refuses to permit his wife to remove her shawl in her own house for fear she will succumb to the casual advances of some passerby. Another will suspect his wife of indiscretions while he is busy not one hundred yards away; still another will insist that his wife ride a horse at his side (an unwomanly occupation) so he can keep her within sight. Some will refuse to enter the Horn Society, because they feel unable to suppress their jealousy, as they are expected to do during their term of membership. A man will quickly, and often with little reason, accuse a brother of being his wife's lover. "You may joke," they say, "with your *taka*'s wife, but if you

[187] Maximilian, *Travels*, p. 253.
[188] *Idem*.
[189] Letter to Harry D. Biele in September, 1939.

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6 Blood

sister and never did what he wanted. Many a son leaves his father's house to live with a married sister because he "can't get along with his brothers."

The age-grade is an important mechanism for solidarity, but alternate grades of the men's societies call each other "fighters." Their actions fulfill expectancy. One man, accused of beating his wife excessively, said in extenuation that he couldn't stand the taunts of his "fighters" who continually reminded him of her pre-marital promiscuity. The conflicts and insult techniques that rule between "fighters" are projected upon the family. Quarrels between young children are explained on this basis. A young boy of nine was tussling more or less playfully with his sister's son aged six. The father of the elder boy, who at the same time was the grandfather of the younger, said, "They just can't get along together. They are fighters." Brothers, merely because of age difference, frequently find themselves in opposite camps.

This institutionalization of hostility, however, only reinforces behavior patterns implicit in the basic structure of the society.[300] Rivalrous attitudes, rooted in the conflicting interests and individualistic goals that dominate the society as a whole, are freely expressed in childhood. They are strengthened by early training. They are nourished in adulthood by differences over property, whether in women, animals, or land. Some brothers have not spoken to each other for more than a decade. Mutual assaults are frequent and fraternal murder is not unknown. Familial attachment created no problem in loyalties for Yellow Wolf when he assisted in the police hunt for his notorious brother, Charcoal.

But when economic advantage demands cooperation, hostility may be repressed, if only temporarily. This same Charcoal, after a serious break with Yellow Wolf, joined his haying camp and accepted his leadership again. The White Plume brothers who beat each other up in the early part of the week camped together a few days later and brought in the wheat.

Childhood rivalries between sisters are more apt to be dissipated in later life. In the buffalo period, many an early antagonism was forgotten because the advantage of being a second wife in a sister's household overcame the disadvantage of continued proximity. In the monogamous present, distance mitigates if it does not completely resolve the friction: after marriage, a woman still generally goes to her husband's house.

Other aspects of housing also affect family relationships. In the past, no

[300] From an anthropological viewpoint, see Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, p. 236; also Ralph Linton, *The Effects of Culture on Mental and Emotional Processes*, pp. 294, 295; also Bronislaw Malinowski, *Culture as a Determinant of Behavior*, particularly pp. 133–139. From a psychoanalytical viewpoint, see Erich Fromm, *Escape From Freedom*, pp. 277–291; also Karen Horney, *The Neurotic Personality of our Time*, p. 188 ff.; also Abram Kardiner, *The Individual and his Society*, p. 55.